DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 187 212 HE 012 635

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TITLE Describing Curriculum Reform: Educational Theory and the Political Process. ASHE Annual Meeting 1980 Paper.
PUB DATE Mar 80
NOTE 36p.: Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education (Washington, DC, March 4-5, 1980). Two pages will not reproduce due to small print.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *College Curriculum; Decision Making; Educational Objectives; Higher Education; Models; *Organizational Theories; *Policy Formation; Problem Solving
IDENTIFIERS *ASHE Annual Meeting 1980

ABSTRACT

The relationship between the content and the context of curriculum was explored by applying basic concepts and approaches from the fields of policy analysis and organization theory. A chronology of the policy formation stage in which the University of Iowa developed its recommendations for curriculum revision is presented. The format indicates major problems considered, key participants, decisions reached, and external contributing influences. An analysis of the participants in the process, their backgrounds, experience, theories of curriculum, the changes actually recommended, and their impact in redistributing advantages and disadvantages among departments is included. Findings suggest that in the stage of curriculum formulation, goals appear to have limited influence upon policy recommendations. Decisions on goals seem to be avoided, and agreement is focused on procedures. However, the third phase of curriculum policy-making, that of adoption, may address the question of goals. It is concluded that the application of a policy analysis model facilitates analysis of sequence and timing in the relationship between theory and design in curriculum, and it provides a useful framework for examining the relationship between the content and context of curriculum. (SW)

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DESCRIBING CURRICULUM REFORM:

EDUCATIONAL THEORY AND THE POLITICAL PROCESS

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February 1980

Presented to the Association for the Study of
Higher Education, March 4-5, 1980
Washington, D.C.

HE 012 635

Introduction

In a suggestive comment William Toombs stated,

> "Few programs begin with a fully composed philosophy which is then implemented by the curriculum in harmony with the premises. The philosophical position of a curriculum is the outcome of many decisions. Once the components are filled in, the prevailing philosophical orientation, if there is a coherent one, will become visible." (1)

Our purpose in this research is to begin to explore the relationship between the content and the context of curriculum by applying basic concepts and approaches from political science, specifically from the fields of policy analysis and organization theory, to the analysis of curriculum revision. This is a case study of the process of policy revision at the University of Iowa.

Our findings suggest:

1. Application of a policy analysis model to the process of curriculum revision provides a useful framework for examining the relationship between the content and context of curriculum.

2. The content of curriculum reflects a configuration of decisions achieved through a complex bargaining* process.

3. A philosophy of curriculum is not a major focus in the formulation phase of curriculum policy-making. It may be explicitly addressed in a later phase.

4. In the formulation phase, agreements are tacit not discursive, and focus on procedures not on goals. (2)

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*Bargaining is a general term describing a process of making or arriving at mutually profitable exchanges. Each person or group, in seeking to satisfy a need or minimize a loss, finds it necessary to interact and exchange with others in that others exert some control over the desired outcomes. Frequently the procedures and negotiation of terms are diffused or implicit with tacit understandings of what is owed and received. Two methods characterize bargaining: compromise and logrolling. Compromise is usually the product of bargains over a single isolated issue when the outcome is one of more or less. Logrolling is concerned with more than one issue or item of interest and involves a reciprocity of support for different items of interest to each bargainer.

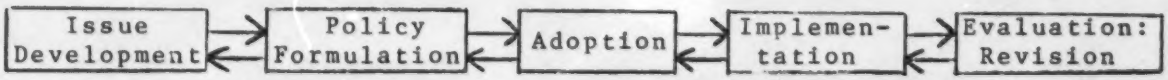
5. Decisions about curriculum, in the formulation phase, appear to be more readily explained by the concept of commonly held cognitive policy maps, derived from shared patterns of socialization and experience.

Concepts and Terms

The process of curriculum development and revision requires educators to address issues which are inherently political in many respects. The fundamental question of politics, posed by Harold Lasswell, takes the form of "who gets what, when and how?" (3) In undertaking curriculum reform educators pose basic questions of politics both for their own immediate role, for their department, their institution, and, in the aggregate, for society at large. The impact of any curriculum change, particularly in times of economic scarcity, directly and indirectly affects the distribution of institutional resources and the motivations and behavior of all participants. The values and priorities encoded into a curriculum represent faculty's collective judgments and compromises with each other as well as define the role and function of higher education within society. Inescapably curriculum change involves political acts at several levels.

Despite the cumulative impact and importance of curriculum decisions, the process of curriculum decision-making responds to seemingly random and highly circumstantial stimuli. Literature in the fields of political science, public policy, and organization theory provides perspectives and terminology helpful in understanding the outcomes of curriculum revision and the relationship of educational theory to practice.

The interpretation of curriculum revision as an exercise in policy making introduces a conceptual framework and several useful analytic tools. Policy analysts posit five stages in the policy-making process. Each stage is interdependent and interactive. There is no necessary progression from one stage to the next and the process can be stymied at any point depending upon numerous factors.



Only the first two stages of this model of the policy process are examined in this analysis of curriculum revision at one university. Adoption, much delayed, is pending at the time of writing.

The first stage in the policy-making process is that of issue development or agenda setting. While most research on decision-making is directed at how problems are resolved, less attention is given in the literature to the question of when and which problems are addressed. Questions pertinent to the case study to be presented here include: Why, after thirty-four years, was curriculum revision the subject of university concern in 1977? What factors focused attention on which issues, and in what sequence? The study of agenda-setting is primarily historical and descriptive. It requires some assessment of the influence of organizational and environmental factors conducive to as well as the immediate stimuli for change.

The second stage in the policy-making model is that of policy

formulation. Included here are the processes of goal setting and assessment of specific programmatic options to attain the objectives. The literature of management, organization theory and decision-making is replete with descriptions of the importance and difficulty of goal-setting. However, available materials are either prescriptive or review particular case studies.

Yet, several concepts are available to facilitate partial understanding of the dynamics of goal-setting and of the development of policy alternatives. Among these are Claus Offe's (4) conceptualization of positive selective mechanisms which operate within a political and organizational process to produce the requisite policy outputs, thereby ensuring that particular policy choices are made by those charged with developing policy. Only limited forms of problems are addressed by organizational mechanisms. Participants implicitly understand the primacy of stability for the social system in which they function. This insight provides substantial explanation of what issues are addressed and how they are resolved within a given organizational setting. A "mobilization of bias" basic to the structure and functioning of any organization conditions selection of participants and policy outcomes compatible with institutional values and needs.

Furthermore, cognitive studies of decision-making indicate that given a complex and uncertain environment, decision-makers rely on "present, cognitive images to process information, to order, understand, remember and interpret it." (5) This concept of a

cognitive policy map provides a tool for the analysis of educational policy-making. A policy map consists of a series of pre-dispositions to limit focus and attention to certain types of problems, to maintain certain values as primary, and to consider only certain explanations as acceptable. It performs a linkage function. In order for a policy map to link the individual and the policy-making process to the institutional and educational environment, it must reflect core values relevant to the range of choices prescribed by the larger organizational environment. In this way choice is conscribed by parameters of the policy map, and yet a genuine multi-group, political bargaining process can operate. By limiting the range of policy outcomes to those consonant with organizational needs and values as well as personal needs and values, the forum for resolving specific debate over curriculum revision is structured. Its focus and task is primarily political, addressing questions of advantage and disadvantage and of constructing a new procedural consensus and organizational coalition.

Another source of analysis is found in the literature of organization theory, particularly as applied to higher education. Relatively little attention has been given to the study of curriculum processes as fundamental organizational policy. Exploration of the nature and limits of rational policy-making processes within institutions of higher education has been clearly delineated by the introduction of several terms and concepts. Universities, as a particular type of postsecondary institution, are viewed as systems of organized anarchy (6) characterized by unclear technologies,

a trial and error approach to procedural definition, and fluidity of participation and attention. (7) Organizational boundaries are uncertain and shifting. Ambiguity and uncertainty are central considerations. Universities are termed "loosely-coupled" systems (8) where neither the technical core of the organization nor the authority of an administrative position significantly contribute to organizational cohesiveness. Loose-coupling limits organizational coordination and standardization. Within this organizational context individuals may experience an enhanced sense of personal efficacy. Decision-making and leadership in higher education are compared to "camping-on-see-saws," a descriptive analogy employed by Hedberg et al. (9)

While this literature has been applied in the field of educational administration, little has filtered into the field of curriculum development. The March and Olsen material on the "garbage can" model of organizational decision-making seems most applicable to the process of curriculum revision being studied. It develops a conceptual framework and terminology useful in understanding the process of curriculum decision-making.

A garbage can decision process views a "choice opportunity as a garbage can into which various problems and solutions are dumped by participants," and from which a decision emerges as an "outcome or an interpretation of several relatively independent 'streams' within the organization." (10) The "streams" forming the mix, based on timing and circumstance, in the garbage can of decision

include: (1) problems, (2) solutions (neither of which are necessarily related or even in sequence), (3) participants, and (4) choice opportunities. Organizational structure influences the outcome primarily by conditioning the factors of timing, allocation of energy, and linkages between streams. Specifically emphasized are the limiting factors of ambiguity, lack of information, inattention, avoidance, and compartmentalization. Garbage can decision-making is characterized by:

(1) Flight and oversight. Resolution of problems by making decisions is avoided unless clearly necessary. Avoiding or ignoring the issue is a preferable decision style.

(2) Sensitivity to load. Increases in load, such as difficulty and number of problems, increase problem solving activity and use of flight and oversight but decrease substantive decisions.

(3) Tracking. Decision-makers and problems move together from choice to choice with very parallel results.

(4) Efficiency. Decision efficiency is tied to "problem activity (the amount of time unresolved problems are actively attached to choice situations--a measure of the potential for conflict), to problem latency (the amount of time that problems spend activated but not linked to choices), and to decision time (the persistence of choices)." (11)

(5) Interaction. Decisions appear capricious because of their high dependence upon timing and participant activity.

(6) Queueing. Factors of issue importance and arrival time condition which problems are addressed. (12)*

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*Two other characteristics are quality and failure. Important choices are much less likely to resolve problems than are unimportant choices because important choices are made by flight

March and Olsen describe in some detail the organizational characteristics of university operations in several contexts. Some of these descriptions are useful in clarifying the process of curriculum revision. First is the observation that participation in university decisions is conditioned primarily by a concern with status. Since the university community holds a widely shared egalitarian ideology, status within the organization is a scarce resource to be carefully guarded. Consequently "academic institutions easily become process rather than output-oriented," (13) and most decisions are "typically not crowded with actual participation except where validation of status positions is involved." (14) Such an observation helps to clarify the incremental nature of curriculum development and the political difficulty of revision when redistribution is the goal. Status is less affected by addition than by deletion of requirements.

Second is the observation that "educational policy insofar as it is a matter for the general faculty, tends to be a fairly straightforward 'log-roll'* among the major faculty groups." (15) Curriculum changes are treated as a bargaining process with the issues of status and self-maintenance functioning as the driving force.

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and oversight while unimportant choices are made by resolution. Failure most frequently occurs among most important and least important choices. March and Olsen, pp. 34-35. Neither of these pertain to the stage of policy formulation.

*See footnote, page 1 supra.

Third, "though educational policy discussions are couched in terms of the educational needs of students, they tend to be substantially influenced by the necessities of organizational life in a university." (16) Outcomes in such a process are dominated by factors of students' acquiescence in submitting to requirements, departmental enrollment needs, and the faculty's desire for smaller classes wherever possible. (17)

These characteristics, which March and Olsen develop to explain their organizational model of university decision-making, add depth to the concepts available in the literature of policy analysis. They de-emphasize the rational characteristics of the process and remove intention as the primary explanatory logic. Instead the focus is directed toward shifting combinations of context, problems, solutions, actors, and timing in conjunction with the structural characteristics and bias in the decision process. This approach stresses the limitations of cause and effect analysis, while providing alternative sources for explanation and strategies for management.

Case Study

Comprehensive, formal curriculum revision last occurred in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at The University of Iowa in 1944. At that time a general education program was adopted. It introduced a combination of required skills courses in the areas of mathematics, rhetoric (speech and writing), and physical education, core distribution courses in the historical-cultural, social

science, natural science, and literature areas as well as requiring a foreign language. Military science was also required of all male students. In the intervening thirty years incremental revision has altered the requirements substantially through minor amendments and course substitutions. Reform was attempted in 1966-67 but failed to reach the stage of faculty adoption. Unlike many universities during the period of student unrest from 1967-71 no major revisions were attempted.

By 1977 substantive curriculum revision was on the organizational agenda. The impetus for such reform is difficult to trace. Little overt dissatisfaction or pressure for change was evident. No group within the faculty or student community had been actively pushing for reform, although most seemed willing to consider it once the issue was introduced. The confluence of key changes in administrative personnel, the timing of an institutional self-study required for a 1978 accreditation review, and the environmental pressures of decreasing enrollments, financial difficulties, and declining performance standards seem to be the most probable sources of explanation in the timing of the present efforts at reform.

The administrative environment changed slowly in the 1970's. A new President took office in 1969. A new Vice President for Academic Affairs was selected in 1974. Perhaps, most importantly, a new Dean for the College of Liberal Arts was chosen in 1977. He came to Iowa with an understanding that the current requirements in general education were due for a major evaluation. His predecessor, Dean for almost thirty years, had not attempted another ma-

jor revision after the 1966-67 effort, and stated that reassessment should be the prerogative of the new Dean.

In the spring of 1977 a university-wide Committee on Educational Directions was appointed by the President and Vice President for Academic Affairs with the charge to produce the institutional self-study document required for the University's decennial accreditation review in the spring of 1978. Beyond the immediate need for an institutional statement of goals, was a desire, expressed by the President and clearly understood by the Committee, for an assessment of academic policy needs in a setting of transition to declining enrollments and income. (18) The purpose of this Committee and the study it produced was broadly construed. In fact all of its specific recommendations appropriate to the liberal arts requirements were later addressed and incorporated into the proposals for curriculum revision.

Environmental concerns provide a third impetus for revision. Declining enrollments and revenues, documented well ahead of time, seemed imminent by 1978. The professional literature for academic administrators and faculty had long since sounded warnings. Articles in the university and local papers about decline appeared with some regularity. In addition, reports of declining standards of academic performance, both on standardized measures used in admissions and in generalized academic grade inflation, circulated periodically. Again the professional literature provided an early and constant source of information for this debate. Within the institution a series of reports confirmed the trend. Faculty fo-

cused on this topic on several occasions in formal discussions as its meaning and implications were debated.

The new Dean of the College of Liberal Arts assumed office in July 1977. Thereafter momentum toward a general review of the general education requirements in the College developed quickly in the various responsible organizational units. In September of that year the Dean offered a series of comments on the general education requirements to the Educational Policy Committee, which is the faculty group charged with matters pertaining to curriculum. By November the Dean suggested a structure for a review process to the committee. This involved the appointment of an ad hoc committee of the Educational Policy Committee. The ad hoc committee would be charged with review of the existing general education requirements. The written record shows that the Dean suggested that the committee be composed of "two undergraduate [students], one faculty member from each of the four core areas, one faculty member from Foreign Languages, and one from each of the three basic skills areas." (19) In composition this committee consisted of representatives of each department involved in the general education program at that time. Three weeks later the Educational Policy Committee received and approved a list of prospective committee members. Before semester break in December the Dean had verbal agreements from all of those who were asked to serve.

The Ad Hoc Committee's charge was broad: to review the present requirements. Little definition appears to have been given

to its procedural role and relationship to the parent Educational Policy Committee or to the limitations which this ambiguity implied for its basic task.

Members of the committee were selected on the criteria of substantial service both in time and in some administrative as well as faculty capacity to the University and availability of time for an involved policy development process. To facilitate communication between the two committees four of the nine-member Ad Hoc Committee also served on the Educational Policy Committee. This two-way communication would have been sustained if the Ad Hoc Committee had completed its charge by the end of the 1977-78 academic year. However, the final report was not issued until September of 1979 or two academic years later, during which time two of the members' terms on the Educational Policy Committee had expired.

The Ad Hoc Committee met for the first time early in February 1978. There were at least ten meetings in the spring, supplemented with faculty forums on each of the eight areas of the curriculum. During the summer an interim report, prepared by the Chair, was developed. The Interim Report was distributed to faculty in October of 1978 after extensive consultation with departments affected by the recommendations. The committee resumed regular meetings in the fall, meeting every Saturday until the semester ended.

Procedures for dealing with the Ad Hoc Committee's report were confirmed in the early fall of 1979 when the final report was published. Prior to that, the problem of policy adoption had been

frequently discussed by the Ad Hoc Committee but there had been no clear procedural delineations to aid in focusing the purpose of the Committee's effort. Adoption mechanisms were suggested by the Dean to the faculty in October of 1979 when the report was published.

When the Ad Hoc Committee's final report was submitted to the University community in the fall of 1979 four open hearings were held to provide for faculty and student discussion of the proposal. Given faculty and student reactions, the Educational Policy Committee is now formulating its recommendations for revisions in the general education requirements. These will be presented to the faculty for vote in the spring of 1980. Formal revision is now well into its third year. It is impossible to say whether any of the proposed revisions will be incorporated into the general education requirements.

Methodology

Data for this study have been collected over the past three months. They include several types of activities: (1) Collection of all pertinent committee minutes and institutional policy statements. This material was readily available but is not complete for the entire process. (2) Review of news accounts and other commentary. (3) Thirteen personal, and on occasion repeated, interviews with nine persons closely involved with the formulation of the revision proposals. All members of the Ad Hoc Committee who are on campus this year were interviewed. Two are on leave for the academic year and no attempts were made to contact them. In addition,

the Dean, the former Dean, and their staff provided valuable assistance in reconstructing the sequence of events as well as in supplying records. The interviews were loosely structured. Five open-ended questions were posed to all, and responses were probed to determine the procedures by which the committee operated, how decisions were made, and the role that philosophies of curriculum played in determining decisions. To lessen difficulties of access and role, all interviews were conducted by one interviewer. Notes were taken briefly during the conversation and more fully recorded later. All participants were generous with their time and even eager to interpret the meaning of the published proposals. (4) Reading of personal notes and materials made available by some of those interviewed. (5) Comparative analysis of the educational and professional backgrounds of those participating in the review process. (6) Participant observation at one of the four open meetings held in the fall of 1979.*

Analysis

Our purpose is to explore, on a preliminary basis, the applicability of the concepts previously reviewed to the understanding

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*Research employing case study methodology which requires reconstruction from historical perspective and personal interviews of a committee process is referred to in the basic works in this area by Clyde Kluckhohn, The Personal Document in Anthropological Science, Social Science Research Council, Harold Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology, Prentice Hall, 1967, Harre P.F. Secord, Explanation of Social Behavior, Littlefield Adams, 1973, and Anthony Giddens, New Rules of Sociological Methods, Basic Books, 1976. A recent work by Sheldon Olson, Ideas and Data: The Process and Practice of Social Research, Dorsey, 1976, provided additional guidance in dealing with the information gathering.

of the substance of curriculum revision. The data will be presented in the following manner. First, a chronology of the policy formation stage in which the Ad Hoc Committee developed its recommendations for revision will be presented. The format is designed to identify the important factors at each point, by indicating major problems considered, key participants, decisions reached, if any, and external contributing influences. In this way the pattern of decision-making will be illustrated. Second is an analysis of the participants in the process, their backgrounds, experience and theories of curriculum. Third is an analysis of changes actually recommended and their impact in redistributing advantages and disadvantages among departments. From this an estimate of the magnitude of the proposed changes can be made. Finally, the nexus between the theoretical literature and events will be delineated.

Table 1 provides an outline reviewing the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Committee on a meeting-by-meeting basis. The outline provides information in the following four areas: the major topics considered, major contributors to the discussion, decisions, if any, and important external factors. This chart is constructed in chronological sequence from committee minutes. There are records of twenty meetings held between February 3, 1978, and December 11, 1978.

Several observations can be made from this outline. First, some discussion of the issue of goal setting is evidenced. A library of classic works on curriculum had been purchased and was

CHRONOLOGY

Table 1

		Problem	Problem Carrier	Decision	Interpolation
1.	a.	Defining committee's function and relationships	Dean, members	----------	Meeting chaired by Dean
	b.	Need to define philosophy of general education	Most members	-further study	----------
2.	a.	Procedural steps: task force assignments, open forum, distribution of responsibilities, deadlines	Chair	-responsibilities assigned	----------
	b.	Discussion for understanding past practice, goals	Chair	----------	----------
	c.	Specific problems in Math and Rhetoric	F, G	----------	----------
3.	a.	Deadline announced as 5/78	Chair	----------	Dean's wish
	b.	Study goals statements	Chair	----------	----------
	c.	Refer to University's self-study	Chair, D, E	----------	Recent publication of university
	d.	Reports and discussion on rhetoric, math	C, D, E, G, H	-further study	----------
	e.	Suggestion for upper level writing course	H	----------	----------
4.	a.	General discussion attempting to focus and define goals	Chair, A, D, E, H	----------	----------
	b.	Review of President's viewpoints	Chair	----------	----------
	c.	Discussion of PE requirement	B, C, D, E, G, Chair	-vote to abolish 6-1-1	----------
5.	a.	Discussion of foreign language requirement	Chair	-apparent support for foreign language	President's speech, Harvard's general education revision
6.	a.	Discussion of literature and history core	Chair, A, C, E, F	----------	----------
	b.	Proposal to group Arts into new core area	Chair, D, F	----------	----------
7.	a.	Discussion of literature core	Chair	----------	Student consultation
	b.	Discussion of social science core	A, C, D, E, F	----------	----------
	c.	Discussion of procedures to make decisions	Chair	-need for outside task forces in core areas	----------
	d.	Proposal for 2 semester math requirement	Chair	----------	----------
8.	a.	Discussion of natural science and math	B, C, G, H	----------	----------
	b.	Proposal for 14 hours each in science and humanities	D	----------	----------
	c.	Discussion on math requirement	D, E, G, H	-consensus - requirement too easy	----------
	d.	Announcement that statement of progress due from Committee to Dean in the summer	Chair	----------	----------
9.	a.	Specific proposal to strengthen math requirements	D, E	-agreement that math is useful, appointed committee to study proposal	----------
	b.	Discussion of rhetoric program	Chair, B, C, D	----------	----------
	c.	Specific proposal for 1 semester introductory writing course, 1 semester writing course in major	Chair	----------	----------
10.	a.	Discussion of preliminary draft of interim report written by Chair, focusing on areas	Chair, D	----------	Chair meeting with Vice President for Academic Affairs
	b.	Draft recommendation on 2-stage rhetoric	Chair	- accepted	----------
	c.	Draft recommendation on math	Chair	- agreement 'in spirit'	----------
		SUMMER ADJOURNMENT			
11.	a.	Discussion of math requirement	Chair, G	----------	----------
	b.	Revised interim report to be distributed to faculty in "affected" areas of Rhetoric, PE, Math before general publication	Chair	-acknowledgement of -potential negative consequences and pressure	----------
	c.	Goals for general education must be addressed. How practical is general education? Goals precede requirements.	H	-discussion to be continued	President's address to faculty
12.	a.	Discussion of final revision of interim report, clarification of math requirement	Couldn't determine	----------	----------
	b.	Consideration of general faculty's role in revising interim report. Whether voting should occur.	Chair, H	----------	----------
	c.	Discussion about nature of general education courses, instructional problems, interdisciplinary issue	D, F, H	-consensus courses be well taught, appropriate to non majors. A to write a statement.	----------

Table 1	Problem	Problem Carrier	Decision	Externalities
13.	a. Procedures for disseminating information to members	Chair	-reassertion of authority	----------
	b. Discussion of who to receive interim report		-no decision	
	c. Forum set up for public discussion of interim report	Chair	-agenda pre-set, no votes	----------
	d. Second math course in math, computer science or statistics	A	----------	----------
	e. Discussion of foreign language	Can't determine	-consensus on retaining foreign language	----------
14.	a. Reports from "affected" departments, reports of meetings with key administrators	Chair	----------	Administration input
	b. Procedures for upcoming faculty forum on interim report	A, F	----------	----------
	c. Comprehensive list of issues read	H		----------
	d. Discussion of foreign language. Need to set hours	E, F, H, Chair	-review next time vote at next meeting	----------
	e. Specific proposal on all requirements	G	----------	----------
15.	a. Procedures for faculty debate on interim report and task forces	Chair	----------	----------
	b. Feedback from "affected" departments	All members	-agreed that final report be more explicit on why PE dropped	Input from PE and Rhetoric
	c. Foreign language debate	Chair, B, D, F, H	-vote to retain # of hours at present level	consulting with foreign language faculty
	d. Requirement in international study proposed	Chair	----------	----------
	GENERAL DISTRIBUTION OF INTERIM REPORT			
16.	a. Specific proposal for all requirements	H	----------	----------
	b. Discussion of a second math course in analytic thinking	C, G	-unanimously accepted as a requirement	----------
	c. Literature to be removed as basic requirement and 1 course instead required as general education requirement	B, H	-carried 9-0-1	----------
17.	a. Proposal to consider international studies as appropriate to general education	Chair	-later consideration	Note from President
	b. Reports from task force on Rhetoric	Chair, A, F	----------	----------
	c. Natural Science area discussed	Chair, A, E, F, G, H	-2 courses to be required	----------
	d. Discussion of Historical/Cultural area and possibility of spliting	Chair, H	-E to write a statement on courses acceptable in each area	----------
18.	a. Discussion of how to arrange requirement in Humanities	Couldn't determine	-require an intro to literature course -failed to specify a personal values requirement -established a category of moral ethical values and aesthics -further consideration of number of hours	----------
19.	a. Written review of hours assigned to date and rationale for areas	Couldn't determine	----------	Dean present
	b. Meeting with Dean, review of committee thinking	Couldn't determine	----------	----------
	c. Discussion of tactics to present final report	Couldn't determine	----------	----------
20.	Last all day marathon meeting - no minutes available			

available for all committee members' perusal. This library is referred to in the minutes and was mentioned by some of those interviewed. The records of the meetings show that the first four meetings in the spring and the first two meetings in the fall addressed the issue of philosophy. These meetings were primarily concerned with overall procedural committee mechanisms. Both attempts indicate some felt need for an intellectual and theoretical basis for the discussion of curriculum reform. The attempts to specify such a framework seem to have been dropped, for no decision about goals was ever recorded or reported by those interviewed.

A second observation concerns the concept of "orderly drift" (20) Several topics wander in and out of the debate with apparent imperviousness to committee action and decision. Others receive little or no attention and yet are substantial components of the final report. These patterns of decision-making can be characterized by the terms, introduced earlier, of resolution, oversight and flight. To review events in this framework the sequence of decisions is outlined in terms of the number of meetings devoted to the issue, the manner in which the decision appears to have been made, the type of curriculum change involved (i.e., major: a new definition of policy, minor: a re-definition of existing policy, and non: no change), and the impact of the decision upon enrollment.

Generally, the three earliest decisions were made by resolution, characteristically by vote. Although these included only one major change, two out of the three involved significant perceived impact

Table 2 Decision-Making Pattern

Area	No. Meetings Topic Discussed	Timing	Type of Decision	Type of Change	Enrollment Impact
P.E.	1	3/21	Resolution	Major	-
Rhetoric	4	6/15	Resolution	Minor	-
Foreign language	4	10/14	Resolution	None	0
Literature	3	10/21	Flight	Minor	-
Mathematics	10	10/21	Flight	Minor	+
Natural science	2	10/28	Resolution	None	0
Int. Studies	2	10/28	Oversight	Major	+
Art/ethics	2	11/4	Flight	Major	+
History	3	11/18	Oversight	Minor	0
Social Science	2	Unclear	Oversight	None	0

upon the enrollments of those departments affected. In fact, all changes with negative consequences upon enrollments were made early. That the committee was sensitive to this issue is clear from the chronology and from the numerous meetings reported between members of the committee and faculty in the affected departments. These meetings, or negotiations, appear to have greater symbolic than substantive value as the results of feedback from the departments were often discussed but these early decisions were never reconsidered.

Interesting, also, is the evidence that as the frequency of

decisions increased toward the end of the process, the pattern of decision types changed. Decisions by flight and oversight appeared to occur more frequently near the end of the committee's effort. Three of the latest four decisions were by oversight, and six of the last seven were resolved by flight and/or oversight. In addition, all but one of these decisions had positive or no consequence upon departmental enrollments. The theory of sensitivity to "load" may explain this pattern. As the pressure to decide increased the frequency of decisions, so too did the use of flight and oversight as a decision-making style.

This table also offers a rough assessment of the level of conflict produced within the committee by each issue. The more meetings at which the issue was addressed, the more difficulties it appeared to pose. These findings are reinforced by the frequency distributions recorded in Table 4 outlining the number of times participants spoke to a particular issue. March and Olsen refer to this as decision "efficiency" (21) by indicating that the length of time a problem remains unresolved provides an estimate of its potential for conflict. The decision to abolish the physical education requirement was the earliest, easiest and produced the least conflict within the committee despite its potential for substantial negative impact on enrollment. The decision on mathematics was the most difficult for the committee and made finally by flight, even though its impact would be minor in terms of change and positive in terms of enrollment. The mix of participation, with one member focusing heavily on this issue, may have helped shape the

saliency of this decision within the committee.

The timing of decisions is also influenced by external and procedural stimuli. This facet of "interaction" results in decisions which appear capricious but in fact clearly respond to tangible structural or environmental conditions. For example, the need to produce an interim report required the statement of viewpoints in authoritative terms. Several decisions were essentially made in the initial writing of the interim report. The changes in the rhetoric requirements were developed in this fashion. Although appearing capricious in origin, since no firm decision was made beforehand, these changes do reflect committee processes and correctly summarize committee views, later confirmed. Load and interaction also seemed to contribute to the decision on social science. There is no record of a vote being taken on the decision. The present social science requirement appears essentially unchanged in the final report of the committee.

The origin of the international studies requirement provides an example of the function of externalities and "queueing" in decision-making. Of all the proposed changes this one most clearly has its origins in input from the administration and from basic values apparently held by the committee Chair. The factor of late arrival, in the form of a note from the President of the University at the sixteenth meeting during the final rush, plus that of its salience, in terms of who valued it, conditioned its acceptance into the revision with no record of discussion or decision. The international studies requirement was injected into the agenda at a

strategic time, from a strategic source. Its incorporation was sustained by oversight. It had no potentially negative consequences upon enrollment.

Finally, the bargaining nature of the process of curriculum revision is apparent at several stages. First, members were acutely aware of the negative consequences of some decisions upon enrollments as evidenced by the terminology "affected departments," used only to refer to rhetoric, literature, and physical education. Second, once initial decisions took form in the interim report, an involved consultative process, primarily focusing upon "affected departments" took shape. The Dean was asked by the committee to appoint advisory task forces to examine the implementation of proposals made in the interim report, specifically the rhetoric and mathematics proposals. In addition, individual members served occasional liaison functions with these departments. None of these procedures reversed previous internal decisions.

It is interesting to note the Committee's bargaining was also directed to the adoption, as well as the formulation phase, of policy-making. A progressive misinterpretation of its function and role in developing recommendations seems to have resulted from these efforts to bargain externally.

One possible interpretation of this very time-consuming procedure is to view it as acknowledgement of the bargaining nature of curriculum revision through preparation for later general debate or attempted cooptation. If curriculum policy revision is viewed

as a "log-roll" among faculty, much close attention must be paid to the stakes in terms of perceived advantages and disadvantages. The Ad Hoc Committee appears to have been particularly sensitive to the problems of those adversely affected.

Table 3

	Age (ave.)	Years at Iowa (ave.)	Rank	
			Full	Assoc.
Ad Hoc Committee n = 9	53	13.6 (6-31)	8	1
Administrators n = 8	52	18.5 (1-33)	7	1

Shared experience both in professional training and in length of experience at one institution seem to provide some indirect explanation for curriculum policy-making in this case. The conservative character of recruitment and of the socialization processes of the academic profession has been discussed. The inverse relationship between risk-taking and length of professional teaching experience has also been established. (22)

Committee members were recruited for service on the Ad Hoc Committee on the basis of availability, service in both faculty and administrative capacity, and as individuals with relatively few perceived radical viewpoints. Assuming that each member spent an average of eight to nine years acquiring the prerequisite education, the average committee member has been involved in his or her profession for at least 26 years and a member of the University of Iowa faculty for 18-19 years. This constitutes a substantial time

period in which common experience may have served to mediate and interpret individual educational philosophies. Such a length of time necessarily creates some common exposure to the institution's educational reasoning and to the administration of a common curriculum. Moreover, those most active on the committee in terms of initiative and participation averaged 27 years on the same faculty.

This length of service may reflect broad acceptance of the institutional context within which the participants function. Over a period of time a self-selection process operates. People find for themselves, within constraints of opportunity and visibility, institutional settings compatible with personal values and needs. Such factors contribute to the mobilization of bias within the institution. When called upon to evaluate policy changes, alternatives will be restricted to the participants' limitations of familiarity and context. Whether explicitly or implicitly, participants have some understanding of the social system within which they function and its institutional bias toward stability. Such factors establish the setting for the incremental or marginal nature of curriculum change.

Such factors may be said to create a type of shared belief system best described as a policy map. Goals for policy are tacit, based on common experience which creates parallel frameworks for processing and interpreting information. This precludes divisive discussions of goals and meaning. The need for discursive agreement is waived by recognition at a practical and implicit level of common experience. Educators appear to be fundamentally unwilling

to explain value judgments. (23)

During each interview members were questioned intensively about the theoretical framework for curriculum. Invariably curriculum goals were described in terms of the specific procedural recommendations made by the committee rather than in terms of any theoretical basis. The following table synthesizes committee members' descriptions of their personal curriculum goals:

Table 4. Type of Goal Stated (N = 7)

Normative		Procedural	
Intellectual emphasis	6	Balance in requirements	4
World/future view	3	Breadth in requirements	2
Enthusiasm for learning	3	Specific course content	2
Preparation for adult roles	4		

The most common reaction of the seven committee members interviewed when asked about their goals was the response that they thought of themselves as pragmatists. Further, most said they did not hold fully defined philosophies of curriculum nor could they formally state their philosophy. Yet, there was more or less general agreement on the overall purposes of a liberal arts education. A liberal education should produce a thinking individual, competent at certain skills, acquainted with a broad range of disciplines, and capable of making ethical judgments. There was also agreement that although it is not possible to require certain courses for all students, there is "strong stuff" to which all students must be exposed in order to broaden provincial horizons.

These findings more readily reflect a policy map for curriculum than an explicit theory of curriculum. Policy maps molded over long years of professional experience permit enough agreement on specific curriculum areas for decisions to be made. Such agreement is primarily addressed to procedures. Specification of goals requires a higher or discursive level of conscious social action and was avoided in this case. A policy map for curriculum permits decision-making about curriculum to be treated as a socialization process rather than as a prescriptive exercise. If, as Gidden's (24) paradigm of the levels of conscious action indicates, there are three levels of consciousness in social action--the unconscious, the practical or experiential, and the discursive--curriculum revision at least at the stage of policy formation is most appropriately viewed as an exercise in practical consciousness. Any rationalization of these procedural agreements requires a shift in levels of consciousness from practical into discursive, from experiental into intellectual.

Table 5 - Participation

This table further illustrates the patterns of participation previously discussed. A frequency count was done based on the minutes. Goals contributed to approximately 10 percent of the total discussion. Relatively few contributed to the debate, perhaps because the major focus of the committee's assignment was, as those interviewed indicated, "pragmatic." A report had to be produced.

Table 5. Frequency and Pattern of Participation

Participant	Topic: Goals	P.E.	Rhetoric	Foreign Language	Literature	Mathematics	Natural Science	Int. Studies	Art/Ethics	History	Social Science	Internal Functioning	Curriculum Adoption Procedures	Totals
Chair	3	1	4	2	1	3	1	2	2	1		9	4	33
A	1		2		1	1	1			1	1			8
B		1	1	1	1		1							5
C		1	1		1	1	1			1	1	1		8
D	3	1		1	1	4	1		2		2	3		18
E	2	1	2	1		3	1				1		1	12
F	1		2	2		2	1		1	1	1		1	12
G		1				5	3							9
H	3		1	2	1	1	2		1	1		2	1	16
Totals	13	6	13	9	6	20	12	2	6	5	6	15	7	120

Table 6 - Curriculum Analysis

Table 6 illustrates that at the University of Iowa curriculum revision has been accomplished to almost as great a degree over the years through procedural "tinkering" and incremental revision as through a deliberate reform process. Three major curriculum redefinitions are introduced by the 1979 proposals: (1) elimination of the physical education requirement, (2) separation of art/ethics from history, and (3) the introduction of an international studies requirement into the general education requirement. Before then reforms had been introduced through incremental procedures and included the introduction of a mathematics requirement and the deletion of military science.

If then, marginal changes, incrementally adopted, appear to alter the substance as well as the form of curriculum, why then does formal revision occur? The answer, based on our limited study, appears to emerge from the examination of timing, environment, and the requirements of the organization. If, as the literature on organization theory stresses, organizations require goals and goal-defining is primarily an executive function, then educational organizations and leadership, too, must be subject to the same felt definitional pressures. Curriculum defines educational program, the central function of the university. Consequently, some process of self-definition facilitates or reinforces, whichever the sequence, an organizational function. By engaging in such a process, the interpretation of common organizational history and goals is re-

TABLE 6. CURRICULUM CHANGES--COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS
(In Terms of Number of Courses Required)

Area	Original 1944	1966	1977	Proposed Revision	Potential Enrollment Gain/Loss
Rhetoric	1-3	2	1-2	1 freshman 1 major field	-
P.E.	4	2	2	0	-
Math		1	0-1*	1-2*	+
Mil.Sci.	4	5 lectures			
Foreign Lang.	2	4	0-4*	0-4*	Same
Nat.Sci.	2	2	2	2	Same
Soc.Sci.	2	2	2	2	Same
Literature	2	2	2	1	-
Hist/ Culture	2	2	2	2	Same
Art/Ethics				2	+
Int.Studies				1**	+

*Variation in hours due to waiving by testing procedures or high school equivalence.

**Can be met by courses in other core areas focusing on non-English speaking civilizations.

affirmed at an institutional level through periodic curriculum review. Again, however, this agreement is produced at a practical, not a discursive level, and the statements of consensus remain operational, not philosophical. Organizational functions and needs must be observed and appear to set the stage for curriculum review.

Conclusion

Application of a policy analysis model to the process of curriculum revision proves a useful framework for examining the relationship between the content and context of curriculum. It facilitates analysis of sequence and timing in the relationship between theory and design in curriculum revision. Our findings suggest that in the stage of curriculum formulation goals appear to have limited influence upon policy recommendations. Decisions on goals seem to be avoided. Outcomes may be more readily explained by the concept of commonly held cognitive policy maps derived from shared patterns of socialization and the bargaining context within which the revision was developed. Agreement is tacit, not discursive, and focused on procedures, not goals.

However, the third phase of curriculum policy-making, that of adoption, may address the question of goals. At that point, in order to broaden the scope of agreement, goals may become the focus of debate to rationalize and justify operational compromises previously determined. The level of dialogue may move from the experiential to the intellectual. The timing of this study precludes any assessment of the characteristics of the adoption phase.

Finally, knowledge of how curriculum revision processes actually unfold suggests that the understanding of curriculum may be enhanced through close analysis of the organizational and political setting within which it is formulated.

Footnotes

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